

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of this application is respectfully requested in light of the following remarks.

Status of Claims

Claims 1-11 were pending in this application. The Rejection of claims 1-11 was appealed; the board affirmed the rejection of claims 1-8 and reversed the rejection of claims 9-11. The examiner did an additional search. Currently claims 1-8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by JP-10-017694, or in the alternative as being obvious from JP-10-017694 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a). Claims 9-11 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Zimmerman, US patent 3,679,540 or in the alternative as being obvious from Zimmerman in view of JP-10-017694. Claim 1 is amended, claims 6, 7 and 8 are cancelled. New claims 12-16 are added.

In a restriction requirement dated February 11, 2008, the office requested restriction of pending claims 9-11. Claims 9-11 are withdrawn. Claims 1-5 and 12-16 are ending in this application.

Amendment enter

Applicants note that in the amendment dated January 21, 2008, that claim 1 was amended and new claims 12-16 have been entered.

Restriction

The office avers that the instant application contain two distinct inventions, Group I defined by claims 1-5 and 12-16 drawn to a method, and Group II defined by claims 9-11 drawn to a diffuse membrane.

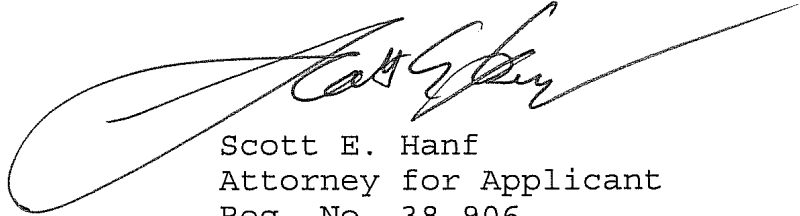
Election

Applicants elect to continue examination with the claims of Group I without traverse. Applicants reserve the right to file one or more divisional applications on the invention, which was not covered by this election. Therefore claims 9-11 are withdrawn from consideration in view of this restriction requirement.

Conclusion

Based on the arguments and declaration filed on January 21, 2008, claims 1-5 and 12-16 should be patentably distinct from the cited references. In view of the foregoing, the Applicants respectfully request an early Notice of Allowance in the instant application.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Scott E. Hanf', is written over a large, stylized, looping flourish that extends to the left and under the signature.

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